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SPEAKERS

Coleman Nee, Chris Mancini, STH/STB, Ghiz Benzerjeb, Chris Byner, Brendan Crighton, Bob Chen, Adrian Madaro, Mercy Robinson, Jason McCann, Nicole McClain, Po Couto, Aaron Meyers, Christian Matyi, Connor Doherty

C Chris Mancini, STH/STB 02:54

My name is Chris Mancini. I'm the Executive Director of Save the Harbor/Save the Bay, we are really pleased to be here. This is kind of a culminating moment for a lot of the work that we've invested our time in over the past 18 months or so. Well, more than 18 months, but we've been holding public hearings for about that long on these subjects. And as we as we get into this, I'd like to introduce and turn it over to our co-chairs starting with Senator Brandon Creighton, co-chair of the Metropolitan Beaches Commission.

B Brendan Crighton 03:30

Thank you, Chris. It's an honor to be here virtually. I'm actually at Chris Magnoli, Little League Field in Lynn. Thankfully, the game is a little delayed, so I'm not going to miss any of that right now for my son. But it's an honor to be part of this, this commission. And I first want to say thank you to Bruce, your entire team at Save the Harbor for all of your work. Certainly to all of our commissioners, it took a ton of time and then all the community members and leaders that have come out throughout this process. When I think back to my early days as a staffer for Tom McGee, when he first joined the Commission, the Commission was first started, the goal was always to get as much input as we could from the public and have it be a community lead process. So I remember the days of sticky notes and in person meetings and you know, gymnasiums and facilities across up and down the coast. And now we've had to adjust to you know, more hybrid virtual setup, but that doesn't mean that, you know, the substance that we've received the communication, the input we've gotten from community members is any different. And I know that from all the hearings we had and all the work that's been done, done behind the scenes, that this is going to be a tremendous Summit, and we're going to have some great results from this moving forward. I am very grateful for all the people that put in all the hard work. I oftentimes feel like, you know, I'm in a class and I'm part of a group project and I'm the kid that just shows up at the end after all the work has been done and kind of says hello and gives a presentation But I'm lucky to be part of a group that's incredibly talented,

incredibly smart, incredibly driven. So thank you. It's an honor to be here. And please wish the Braves the best of luck here in our very important little league game. Now the kids are coming over here. Thank you.

C

Chris Mancini, STH/STB 05:19

Thank you, Senator. And I don't know if that was, I think your modesty was sincere. But I do need to say that. Oh, there we go. Go team. I do need to say that that you definitely put in the time and put in the work. So, you know, our commissioners are not just figureheads. I assure everyone else here, they're there doing the work. They are responding at all hours of the day, as we are moving these issues forward. Representative Modaro, I would love to, we'd love to hear from you as well.

A

Adrian Madaro 05:52

Thank you, Chris. Good morning, everyone. It's a pleasure to be with you. My internet's a little shaky so I'm going to keep the camera off, and hopefully, you'll be able to hear me. But today is an important juncture in the work of the Metropolitan Beaches Commission in the work of Save the Harbor/Save the Bay. Want to echo Brendan's thanks to Chris, Bruce, and the entire team as well as our fellow commissioners. We were really intentional at the outset of this session in terms of figuring out what we wanted to focus on in this session. And given everything that's been going on nationwide, we decided to really focus in on racial justice, looking to make our public spaces better for people with disabilities, and trying to address language accessibility. These are really important issues that certainly have been persistent problems for quite some time. But obviously, they've come to a head given kind of national discourse and dialogue. And so it really is timely and incredibly important that we focused our efforts on these topics in this session. So you know, over the course of the past number of months, we hosted a bunch of hearings soliciting verbal testimony, written testimony on all of those issues, all in the effort to try to improve our beaches. And I will say, I too, was a staffer like Brendan, when my predecessor was on the Metropolitan beaches commission. And I can personally attest to the incredible benefits that we in East Boston have had benefited from at Constitution Beach, whether it's improved infrastructure, or whether it's the incredible programming that really activates our beaches and brings people to enjoy what's one of the most important natural resources in my district. So it really is an honor to now be the state rep for East Boston and continue that partnership with Save the Harbor/Save the Bay and the Metropolitan Beaches Commission. And I'm really, really excited about where we are now focusing on these issues. And today, you know, really, we want to hear from community members to see if we're kind of on the right track. And certainly, that is our hope. But this work is all about partnerships. Right? So Brendan and I, and our fellow commissioners who were legislators can only be as effective in the legislating that we do in the budget advocacy that we do. You know, that's all contingent on the partnerships we have with places like Save the Harbor, Save the Bay, but most importantly, with community members on the ground, which is why it's critical that, you know, we not only hear you, but we listen to you. And we really implement your feedback, because it's only with working together that we can realize the best beaches possible in the metropolitan region. So really excited to, you know, work with you all. And I'm excited about next steps from here because I have no doubt that our work will continue to improve our public beaches in and around Boston. And I'm just so grateful for all of you participating, not only today, but over the course of the past several months.

C

Chris Mancini, STH/STB 09:05

Thank you, Senator, and Thank you, Representative, you just made my job a lot easier because you covered a lot of the stuff I was I was planning to say. So that's wonderful for me, because we can jump right into into our presentation. I'm going to speak for about 15 minutes with a bit of a slideshow and there will be moments throughout where I'm going to turn to the folks in the room and ask you a question, ask to hear from the community, hear from all of you. We are holding this summit today to share what we've learned over the past years from the hundreds of people who've participated in these hearings. And then to give you all a chance to let us know if we got it right, and what to do next. We recognize this work is ongoing. We think we've made some some steps forward and we know we have more steps to do. And that's what we're doing here. Ultimately, our goal here is to take this next round of feedback. And today we're sharing our findings. And then we're looking to share our recommendations. That will be our roadmap for the next couple of years so that we can continue to take action on the ground and make improvements on our region's public beaches. And of course, today's summit is particularly relevant given that we are hosting it on this Juneteenth weekend, not the first official federal holiday, that was last year, but in a sense, the first year it's truly kind of, I think, universally being recognized and celebrated. So we're really glad to be some small part of that. Alright, so I'm going to begin here. And we'd like to start by thanking everyone for your participation in this. Of course, our metropolitan beaches commissioners and our commission co chairs who you've already heard from Senator Crighton and Madaro, and I we couldn't have done this without Save the Harbor's fantastic policy team, led by our lead consultant, Bruce Berman. And then our amazing team, Maria Rodriguez, Caroline Adamson, Mimi Huckins, and the rest of Save the harbor staff that supported this, including Elizabeth McLaughlin, Kristin Berry, Maya Smith, and Joye Williams and Patricia Salice, I think I got everybody. And of course, thank you to our board members who are here, and who have supported us throughout this. So after the Metropolitan beaches Commission has released two reports so far in 2008, and 2014, focusing on maintenance and infrastructure improvements on our region's public beaches. And as we look to do our third release, we began to examine all aspects of our work through the lens of racial justice and equity, realizing that improvements to our public spaces are not just about the very important things like making sure the bathrooms are open and making sure the trash is cleaned up. These continue to be incredibly important, but there are things we were we were not addressing and wanted to focus more explicitly on. And, of course, as representative Madaro mentioned, and as we all are very familiar with, you know, protests against police brutality and violence against people of color broke out universally across the country, when we were scheduling our public hearings on racial injustice on our in our own backyard. Now, as we began this hearing, we held our first hearing in May 2021. Specifically on on racial injustice, racial and systemic racism and access for people of color on our beaches, it really became clear that the perceptions that people have of our public beaches are shaped by people's personal experience. And those of people you know, people's friends and families, overwhelmingly, what we heard from the hundreds of people who participated, were reports of feeling unwelcome or being uncomfortable on the beach. This really, you know, struck home because Save the Harbor, since our early days, in 1986 when we were founded, and into the 90s, when we saw a clean harbor, began to be realized that these beaches, 19 miles of public beaches, the Boston Harbor Islands, Boston Harbor belongs to the public, we are all investing in that \$5 billion investment that gave us clean water and continues to give us clean water and some of the cleanest urban beaches in the country. And the fact that half our population is not feeling that ownership is simply unacceptable. Of course, those perceptions were also influenced by historic and current images of violence and conflict on our beaches. You know, we're not going to focus on these images. And these stories are very, you can find them with a simple Google search on

the beaches, but instead, we're trying to acknowledge the past but look forward. And we want to share this most recent image from just two weeks ago of community leaders and law enforcement joining hands on Carson Beach, in South Boston, again, the cleanest urban beach in the country, in a prayer for peace, and once again, as we do regularly, and we do at each of our hearings, we had saved the harbor and the Metropolitan beaches commission to reaffirm our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusive access to these spaces. And as I said, following this summit, the commission will present our recommendations and a statement of our shared vision and values for the Metropolitan beaches commission to the legislature The Massachusetts State Administration Department of Conservation and recreation, and to the public and all of you, there's going to be opportunity to speak today. But please also share your thoughts and comments with us by email to info at savetheharbor.org. And through our metropolitan beaches commission survey, which is available on our website, on our blog, Maria is going to be sharing the link to that in the chat. And, again, verbal written testimony, anything is going to just keep this this process going and make this stronger. So to jump right in, we held our first hearing on improving beach access for people of color. We were joined by over 100 people from every community along the coast as well as a number of communities, inland and upland people who use the beaches, we were really pleased to see so much involvement in this. And again, we heard overwhelmingly, we heard very specific to different towns and communities, improvements that could be made. And you can go to the MBC website and see that recording, you can read the transcript in English or translated into any language there and see all of the feedback we received. But one piece that jumped out was this comment from Abdi Ali from the east anti racism Community Coalition have these incredibly connected and involved in the East Boston community and hearing from him and for many others that the importance of specific culturally relevant activities on the beaches is a key part of making a place feel welcome and comfortable. And after holding this hearing, we recognize there was some steps we could take to address to address these issues in the short term and immediately. And so just to share some of what we tried to accomplish in the past year, was first off to look at the diversity of the commission itself and looking to increase representation and diversity on the commission. I'm really pleased to say you know, given some open seats that we had on the commission, and given some turnover that some longtime commissioners were looking to step down and change. And we have a number of you are here today we're really pleased to welcome some of our newest commissioners including his Ghizlaine Benzerdjeb, Jim from the community of Revere, Professor Bob Chen from the UMass Boston as our academic representative. I just saw our newest nonprofit representative Nicole McLaine joined. you've made amazing time from your flag raising and was at Gloucester I believe, doing actual on the ground work to come back and be at our at our at our virtual Summit. Thank you. And I'm leaving someone out. We do have two pending commissioners who we expect to be officially appointed in the next few few hours, if not few days. Christopher Byner from the Boston Police Activities League and mercy Robinson and I saw you here from South Boston Accion. And of course our newest senate representative with her election. Last year, Senator Lydia Edwards. In addition to that, we've made a point to increase outreach through all of our programs and all of our efforts. Although this was always a goal. We've refocused on this to people of color and people with disabilities and non English speakers. We are really proud to have worked with our youth development and community partners to distribute and we are continuing to distribute life jackets and water safety instruction. Really specifically to groups that work with kids of color, as we know from the tragic data that youth of color are six times more likely to die from drowning as white kids. And you know, working in partnership with the swim safely partnership with the city of Boston with the DCR as lifeguards with the YMCA is lifeguards to provide swimming safety instruction had our beaches and continue to do that. And over two and a half years, we've expanded our better beaches program in partnership with the DCR funding 40 new partners and scores of new free beach events. Here's a photo from our

recent award ceremony last weekend when we could go right now. You can find the complete list of our better beaches Program Partnership and thanks to these amazing folks, these 62 grantees and the amazing staff at save the harbor this summer starting this weekend. You should be able to find a free event. Concert, camp, A ride on a pedi cab a event with trike called funk on a beach nearly every day of the summer and I want to call out three our three major grants from this year to the end that we tried to focus on the three issues that we honed in on with the Commission, including major grants to support triangle Inc, the beachability event, performances by the Veronica Robles cultural center, and a trike called funk. And now it's time to hear from you what can we do better? What do you what's your response to our findings, what's not been included? And I'd love to I know, Chris Byner here from from the Boston CYF. And I know you have a word or two on this subject is Chris still here, I know people's internet's can be

C Chris Byner 20:47

I am. Good morning. And thank you for for allowing me to be here today. You know, it's really exciting to be a part of the work that's taking place on you know, over the last couple of years at Save the Harbor/Save the Bay and, you know, when I first joined Save the Harbor/Save the Bay, you know, things looked a lot different. And I'll tell you, you know, I would talk to people about my work with Save the Harbor/Save the Bay, especially in communities that were underserved. And many people didn't even know what the work was that was taking place, at Save the Harbor/Save the Bay. So, you know, I talked to them now. And they're actually participating and programs and activities that Save the Harbor/Save the Bay is organizing and leading. And so it speaks volumes to the true commitment of Save the Harbor/Save the Bay, especially as it pertains to, you know, inclusion and diversity and, and really gives people who quite frankly, didn't feel comfortable at the beaches, opportunities to really show what they want that beach to look like, and feel like and be a part of, you know, the not just the programming and activities, but, you know, decision making. So, you know, I certainly think that Save the Harbor/Save the Bay, the beaches commission hearings have really been fruitful for, you know, the work that's taking place, and certainly, over time, it will only get better. I'm so excited to see so many organizations who typically would not be at the beach, you wouldn't typically, you know, and they actually would love to be at the beach. But you know, in many cases, it was just for, for lack of knowledge. And so the intentionality of going out and, and engaging in those those organizations, I think, has just been phenomenal. So, you know, I think, as we continue to move forward and continue to engage in tenure, continue to invite people to the table, it will only get better. So, you know, I really just want to want to commend Save the Harbor/Save the Bay, the beaches commission, and all the partners for all the work that they've been doing. And, you know, I'm looking forward to having this summit, it's gonna be a lot of fun, I know it will. So just thank you, thank you for allowing me to be a part of it and, and, you know, continue to do great work.

C Chris Mancini, STH/STB 23:35

Thanks so much, Chris. I really appreciate you being here and saying that I hope I'm not getting ahead of ourselves or being too superstitious when I have announced you and mercy as as new commissioners. Before it's technically official though. It's in the process. So we're looking forward to you joining the commission. Anyone else please raise use the raise hand function

and Maria can call on you. You know, any commissioners, who are welcome to speak to this issue in your own communities. We'd love to hear from any members of the better beaches partnership or residents of any beaches. I see Coleman's hand is raised.

C

Coleman Nee 24:20

Hi, can you hear me? Yes. Yeah. Great. Thanks, Chris. Yeah, welcome, everyone. Good morning. My name is Coleman knee. I'm CEO of triangle Inc. We are a disability service agency with programs and residences in the greater Boston area and North Shore and even in the South Shore. I have a really interesting perspective on this because I've really been involved with this commission since its inception. I go back to when when Senator Jack Hart was the chairman of the Commission back in the day and and the incredible work that the commission has done and thanks to not just the representatives on the commission, but the incredible advocacy of Save the Harbor/Save the Bay has made a tremendous impact. And we've seen a lot of a lot of improvements. You know, I want to talk about our experiences from Triangle, Inc. and the disability community. And I cannot tell you how thankful we are that, you know, when we talk about inclusion, and we talk about accessibility, we're talking about all of our citizens not certain segments, and particularly those citizens that have disabilities and across a broad spectrum of challenges that they deal with on every day. We, several years ago, with support from Save the Harbot said that they were able to have some of our residents go out to different beaches, and do a survey about the accessibility and what they liked, and what they thought needed improvement. And, you know, it was really amazing, we brought people to the beach, and we discovered that so many of our residents, so many of the people that we serve, have grown up in Waterfront Communities, and yet, they have never either been to the beach, or very infrequently have ever been to these these public resources. And were really amazed at how beautiful they were, how much fun they could have, how much available our beaches were to them. But also, there were challenges. It says that, and they noted that challenges with accessibility, challenges with transportation, getting to the beach has challenges with parking, challenges with not just infrastructure, but programming and sort of non-ableistic conditions that existed at the beach that, you know, might have prevented them from fully enjoying them. So we, you know, we took the results of that survey, we decided to do a beach:ability event, and with a very generous grant that we've received every year from Save the Harbor/Save the Bay, and today, we'll be celebrating again, beach:ability at the end of July, at constitution beach in East Boston. And it's really grown. And now we have over 100 people that come to the beach, not just from triangle inc., but from other agencies and people just in the community who have disabilities, whether they be physical disabilities, developmental, intellectual, or they're from our neuro-diverse community. What we've heard from a lot of these folks, whether it's getting into the water for the first time in their life, because now they had a floating wheelchair that they were able to access to get out there to just how much fun they have to the scenery and the serenity and just mental health benefits that these beaches have for them, they really, really enjoy that. And I think we've come a long way in making the beaches more accessible, but there is still a long way to go. You know, we really need to make sure that our beaches are accessible from an infrastructure perspective, and that they meet ADA requirements. And that all of our infrastructure is pertinent to all of our citizens, not just some of our citizens, we also need to make sure that the equipment that will make those beaches more accessible is readily available. And they're things like mobility mats, floating wheelchairs, different different life saving, rescue equipment, bathrooms, and just the ability to order from a snack bar, you know, that it's people, all people have the ability to be able to get that. And third, I think we really need sort of even more investments in programming for the beaches, to the Universal Access program, but also ensuring if we're doing kayaking, if we're doing sailing,

if we're doing events at the beaches, make sure that those those programs have an accessible component to them. And that people that work in our beaches, whether they be lifeguards, or beach managers or maintenance folks, have training in ableism, have that understanding of the disability community, and make sure that those folks have the ability to be able to use these these resources. Many of the people that we serve are not wealthy, many of them exist at or just above our poverty line. And, for them, having the ability to go to these beautiful resources which are right in their backyard in their communities that are free and accessible, and provide a day of enjoyment and a day of connecting with nature and camaraderie and relaxation, it is vitally important that we ensure that those folks have the ability to do that, I think we've come a long way, we've certainly come a long way with water quality and the cleanliness of the beaches, we've come a long way with accessibility and getting more people to the beach. But I would just encourage that we keep the focus on that and make sure that we make the necessary investments. So that when we talk about the beaches being accessible to all, that all really does mean all. And with that, I'll turn it over. And thank you for your time.

C

Chris Mancini, STH/STB 30:39

Thank you so much, Coleman. That's a perfect segue into our next hearing, which we can make the share screen work, which we held last November on improving beach access for people with disabilities. And it's not to give this is a this is an open session. So I encourage people to if anyone else would like to speak to racial justice and access for people of color, please do so now or at any point throughout the hearing. Mercy, Yes, thank you.

M

Mercy Robinson 31:17

Sorry, it took me a while to get on the computer. It's finicky. My children are on their electronics, and that's the only way I can be on this meeting. So if I cut out I apologize. I want to thank Save the Harbor/Save the Bay, it has really made a difference over the past couple of years. And with all the events happening at the beaches, a lot of the residents have pointed out that, you know, they're having a lot more fun at the beaches, that they feel included, that they feel like you guys are really working hard to make it a happy place, an enjoyable place for them to go to and a lot of our residents that I've come in contact with in the past have said, Well, I've never been to Carson Beach, yet they lived in South Boston for 15 plus years was very, it was mind blowing to me. So getting them out there at these events, it's well appreciated. And I want to thank you. But we still have a lot more work to do. Chris, you were on mute.

C

Chris Mancini, STH/STB 32:23

That's always the qualifier. Yeah, there's always more work to do. And we will always say that. So that's why we keep holding. So we keep making you all show up on the Saturday morning to talk to us. I guess it's so good to see you. And I hope that's a real background. You're sitting in that beautiful garden. Oh, we can't hear you. You're not on mute. But it may be your headphone. Give it one more chance, and then I'll give you I'm gonna move to Jason while you see if you could figure that out.

J

Jason McCann 32:57

I'm Jason McCann on the Hull resident Commissioner. And also, since I became a commissioner, started a group of friends modeled after a lot of the other friends groups that were done around here for Nantasket Beach. We didn't have one until a couple of years ago. And I just want to reiterate. Yeah, I mean, just so much appreciation for Save the harbor, Save the Bay and particularly this this last year with both the Commission hearings, and also how the better beaches program has been administered this year to open things up to get more people, different types of grants to diversify, you know, to support more communities of color, because from my perspective, looking, I guess, in a lot of ways with this as a top down organization, but you know, my representation is more bottom up from an individual beach, you know, Nantasket Beach is so interesting, because it's located in a majority white town. But the visitors throughout the year, especially during the summer is majority people of color. And so having this kind of the support from the organization also through these individual programs where we can start offering things that are more diverse that really for Nantasket beach in particular, represent the diversity of the beach that's there, which we really haven't had, like a lot of the programming, a lot of the things that have been done on at Nantasket Beach, there's kind of a mismatch, it's predominant, has predominantly been for people for white people. And so I've just been so energized by by meeting all the different people who are connected through the organization and just to echo the previous person what they said and in terms of the more and more events really making people feel included and for us feeling like we're offering and starting to offer events that reflect the people who are coming. So I just wanted to offer that gratitude and excitement for the work to continue.

C Chris Mancini, STH/STB 34:54

Thanks so much, Jason. I mean, it's amazing, the new stuff that we're seeing, all down in Hull and I really appreciate you being there. Good. You want to give it another shot?

G Ghiz Benzerjeb 35:06

Can you guys hear me? Yeah. Okay, awesome. Thank you for having me, Chris, it's been so nice to see all your faces, speaking your words, and really believing and really hearing what you guys have to say, in terms of just POC on the beaches. You know, speaking as someone who's a person of color herself, it can really be hard to find that kind of community. I know, I've been really, really blessed, and I'm having the kind of support systems in my life, but I will say it did not go without being completely out there and completely throwing myself into situations or into friendships or connections with people that I really had no relation to, and that can be hard at times. And I think maybe something that we can start to look into, really explore a little bit amongst the beaches is the idea of intersectionality. I think that a lot of- I'm talking specifically for youth, by the way- a lot of the youth out out on these beaches, if you will, have very diverse means of thinking, come from all different places, are influenced by all sorts of places. For me, I'm Algerian, but let me tell you, Arabic food might not be my favorite, but Salvadorian food will always hit for me. So there's even like these weird niche nuances. It's very unique to the Boston area or even Revere Beach itself. I think maybe starting to explore intersectionality and what that looks like for youth that attend particular beaches can be a really great starting point, because it's not just going to be a straightforward situation. Oh, this person's x, That means they'll like they'll like x, but then it might not be the case. You know, it could be completely different. You never know who their best friends are. You never know who their most influential teachers were. You never know these things. And I feel like maybe taking

into account that intersectionality is a uniting force within the youth that we have out here. I'll say for Revere Beach at least. Maybe we can start looking into that dig in deep in there and try and find some unity within that

C

Chris Mancini, STH/STB 37:17

Ghiz, that's amazing. Thank you so much for saying all that. You beat me to intersectionality but thank you and I don't know if the end of our presentation, I should pretend like we just responded so fast to your comments, or if you'll just be delighted that we're already on onboard here, but I won't spoil it for everyone. Christina and Po, haus of threes. I love seeing you guys look like you're really responding to everything. I love that active listening.

P

Po Couto 37:50

Thanks for the introduction, Chris. Nice to meet everybody. I'm Po, the founder of haus of threes. This is Christine, my co conspirator. We are the first queer collaborative in Boston. And I'm so glad that we are coming off of a conversation about intersectionality. The haus motto is a minority plus a minority equals a majority. And I don't think that without everyone coming together and finding the spaces in which we have commonality, to push community through these spaces, it's not going to work in my opinion. I've been watching for 22 years, you know, and haus of threes is here to make sure we can do our best to make that happen. Very, very appreciative for the grant. We are bringing a ton of queers to Revere Beach, and what that means is visibility. Okay, in our community, you know, we represent everybody. I say queers are the Trojan horses, we exist everywhere. And now is the time for action in a way that is playful. I'm gonna get a little emotional about this, you know, for someone in my community to be able to take their shirt off on a beach and wear those scars of honor and know that every single time they're gonna take their life in their hands just so they have the right to do something that people do. so just a privilege that I don't think people really feel when you got to the beach and take your shirt off or not think about the fact that you know, you could be spotted, followed. Yeah, I said I was gonna get emotional about this to having this opportunity is absolutely fascinating. The talks of intersectionality and when we talk about privilege, one of the things at haus of threes we talk about is that only privileged can check privilege. With the voices of the un privileged, meaning, I will check everyone with white skin on behalf of anyone I know who is not that, you know, being autistic, we talk about autistic people checking other people. This is why it is important that as people who have been othered, that we come together because if not, we're invisible. And that's where there's danger. So to make it clear, this is going to be an amazing, happy event with so much visibility, and just so much progress. You know, that's one thing that we stand for, for three years. Pride is great. It's a great tool. But when we come down to change, and coming together, it's about progress. So I want to thank you for giving us this opportunity and platform. And anyone in this group or anyone out in any of these communities that needs space to organize, clear their head, feel safe, make art be around community, how Haus of threes is open to that. So please, we're on Instagram, slide into our DMS, the space is open for you just to come and unite, do what you need to do and take a breath. So again, want to thank you for this opportunity. And looking forward to this we're looking soft day, I think is August 13. That being said, Anyone who wants to get on board and help out, we're also looking for that. Thank you again, for this forum. Wow.



C Chris Mancini, STH/STB 41:39

I mean, thank you for for, for speaking. I think my my thoughts I was having while you were speaking it's like I think emotion sometimes is under underappreciated in a forum like this. But it's so powerful. And I really appreciate you kind of putting that out there. My brain thinks so like, oh, you know, what's the next step? And I think a testimony like that Po is such a powerful tool as we start looking at the next phase, you know, how do we advocate? How do we find more funding? How do we bring people together? So I mean, don't be surprised if I started texting you a lot and asking for to talk more. So I appreciate that. And thanks for putting yourself out there.

 42:29

C Chris Mancini, STH/STB 42:32

Yeah, thanks for bringing like the first the first queer visibility focused event to to the better reaches program. I'm really excited about it. Thank you so much. And one point, I wasn't sure did you say just to be queer, just to be clear, I don't know.

P Po Couto 42:46

You know, I think we can go with that. There's a shirt right there. Let's sell it. We'll put your name.

C Chris Mancini, STH/STB 42:50

I don't even know if that was on purpose or not.

P Po Couto 42:56

Just to be clear, we are queer.

A Aaron Meyers 43:08

Thank you so much, Chris. My name is Aaron Meyers. I am one half of a trike called funk, which is a mobile musical pop up party machine. It's got its own sound systems, speakers, portable dance floor. And what we love to do that is, me together with Eddie, who's the resident DJ, is activate public space with an interactive mix of music and movement that really allows people to unleash their creativity, connect with one another. And ultimately, we're about building community. And so on behalf of myself, and Eddie, I just wanted to say a few things. First, a word of appreciation for Save the harbor, Save the Bay, I really appreciate what proactive and participatory approach you've taken, good planning. You know, when it comes to the consultations you've done to inform what you're planning to do in the future. Also, you've

created a feedback loop, you know, you've let us know, here's what came out of what we heard from all of you. And now I hear you bringing it to bear on the work that you're undertaking with the beaches commission. And as it relates to devices of diversity, equity, inclusion, I also see you really making a consistent effort to more fully live them. I echo what we heard earlier about, there's always more work to do, there's more to learn. But I see you doing that internally, I see it reflected in your staff at different levels. I see you trying to exercise that in terms of who is on your board, and even on the beaches commission. You know, it's not enough just to consult the community and then bring the information to bear on what you're doing. But I think you got to have people who are a reflection of the community, also in positions of authority, that exercise and help make the decisions. And so I see that starting to happen and for me that's that's just that's really bodes well for the future. On behalf of what we've been able to do with better beaches funding, I think there's two important things that I like very quickly. One is that my part undeniably, we come from the world of dance, street dance specifically, but also international dance traditions. He's asked for that next, he's from the Dominican Republic. And what it's allowed us to do when we pop up and get down on different beaches. Last year, we had something called put your body in motion by the ocean. It allows us to bring in creative collaborators and members that are from these communities from which these traditions come these beautiful dance music, traditions, and all participate but to showcase their talents and play music that maps to the populations that are coming to the beach, or who we want to see on the beach, having fun with us and one another. So when it was Revere, it was about having our friend Francis Noel's as part of meta movements, Latin Dance Company, play a mix of different Latin music, but also Brazilian music, we had some of you out there dancing with us as a dance collaborator. So this is what you've allowed us to do is to create these opportunities and a platform, if you will, in the community, with our creative collaborators. But the other thing you've done really appreciate in our series this year, is that you connected with the community based organizations who share our values. So now as we plan for our next series, which is called bike to the beach and Boogie, we're now collaborating and trying to bring up the bicycling community, which maybe hasn't even made its way along any of the shoreline, right that you hope to curate and steward. But we're now talking with Quinncycles, One of the other grantees about an activation on Wollastan Beach, we're so excited for that. It's just allowed us to build out our community and collaborate around things that are really exciting. And even last but not least, beyond what's happening as a part of better beaches initiative. You connect to this with folks like Nicole McClain of North Shore Juneteenth Association, that just sort of flag raising ceremony for this important holiday downtown and and we were able to collaborate with them and while it's beyond the scope of blue and green spaces that would not have happened had you not help us connect with them through the better beaches initiative. So, so grateful to all of you so excited for the summer and to come together and get down. And thank you for this opportunity to share our perspective.

 Chris Mancini, STH/STB 47:07

Well, thank you Aaron. And sorry, I mispronounced your name earlier. I always get that wrong. But no, I would really appreciate the feedback and love working with you guys. And of course the the event in Lynn was you know, it was the one time I was in the office instead of working from home right near Lynn when I could have actually come to that it looked amazing. Christian will do that but both trike groups right back to back.



Christian Matyi 47:33

Yeah, one thing better be just needs to work on us not having me always follow Aaron because I can't. I can't I mean, this is just unfair now



Chris Mancini, STH/STB 47:41

One second, I thought that was gonna be always honest, useful feedback. But



Christian Matyi 47:47

yeah, that's all I got. That's all. So, you know, I'm with the trike hub. We're the giant pedicab tricycle people and I just wanted to start with thanking better beaches for, well earlier haus of threes was mentioning Trojan horses, and as a queer man. I'm a bit of one. But pedicabs are the ultimate Trojan horses well, because one of the things just getting us out on these beaches. Great. So we have these people, creating ambassadorship, creating belonging. And one of the things that happens for the drivers is we hear the stories in real time and pedicab. There's a thing called Downtown dish where once people get on this thing, honesty flows out of them. And it's just as the driver you get everything, but you name the experience, they're going to tell you about it. And so when we were on the beaches, we were able to literally casually gather real time response, real time Experience. And the thing that, you know, we were often hearing was about, like a sigh, like, Oh, I feel like I belong here. And that's the purpose of this vehicle is to create that ambassadorship to create that sense of belonging and a space. It's a magical thing. It's really a magical, it looks like a goofy wagon. And it is a goofy wagon, but at the same time, as far as connecting people, it's incredible. From that, though, what we're hoping for this year, and we want to keep doing is tap into us. We're aligning a lot of our work with other events. And it's amazing, the casual information we gather, I should say the very formal information we gather casually, we hear the experiences. It's almost like micro therapy. We're not trying. It's just what happens. And that's exciting for us, but it's also it represents, I guess, a positive challenge. How do we scoop up all this ambassadorship? How do we get these experiences and get them back to whoever we're working with? Whether it's better beaches as a whole or whether it's the individual events that we're at? We want people to lean on us, excuse me, to gather that because every time we're at an event, we're getting what may not be said. You know, you're the organizer, they come up and they want to be positive. "Oh, and this is great." But we'll hear that. Well, you know what, there was, for example, one of the things that came a few times, surprise, surprise. And this is actually maybe a challenge for better beaches to put in the back pocket. We really don't know which parts of Massachusetts were legally seated from the indigenous and I can't tell you how often that comes up along beaches, which seems like a small thing. When you're talking about all this other stuff, social justice, and then it's suddenly you realize that's not a small thing. That's kind of a big thing to at least know what is going on. And so then we have these these engaging conversations. That's one topic. The other topic is, I'll tell you this much where a pedicab can sneakily go, is where a wheelchair could go, or where someone with special mobility issues can go. We are the ultimate assessor of whether or not the job is being done for accessibility. And so this is one of the reasons why we're glad to be there. Because we literally, were doing casual survey, the whole time of this ramp sucks are this sidewalks terrible, or, you know, you know, this pavement is like more holes than pavement, these kinds of things. We want all these experiences I'm talking about. We want to get them back over to you guys as opposed to just like casually gathering them. So that's partly our challenge, but also something we want that

challenge. Just so folks know, pedicab drivers are all independent contractors, and we work together in a collective. But at the same time, at the end of the day, I don't know if anyone heard capitalism called it's not going away. So we have to make our money. And that's kind of what pedi cab drivers do. But when tasked with this kind of thing, our job is literally to be an ambassador. So that's when when we come alive, that's when we want to do a better job for you. So we're excited that better beaches is giving us is basically hiring Trojan horses. I think it's brilliant genius. More of that, please. But yeah, we're still gathering up where we're going to be this summer. So bother us if you think you need a Trojan horse. But also, just from a experience stem, but just from a data gathering point. You know, you have Trojan horses, they look like you know, fun things to do. You know, rather than downtown dish, maybe it's beach tea. I don't know what you want to call it, but we can gather it for you guys. I'm excited for the opportunity. I think it's long overdue.



52:47

Granted, we're an entertainment technically, but using us for accessibility using us for data gathering using us to connect, you know, people who don't have any sort of familiarity with the beach to suddenly make it there's hugely like, that's my emotional point, like, hugely overwhelming. I'll echo what people said, I can't tell how many people had never been on a beach. And they could breathe a sigh of relief because now they're being taken around like damn royalty and that's how it should be. So um, thank you so much, Chris and everyone at better beaches and I'll shut the hell up I talk too much.



Chris Mancini, STH/STB 53:24

No, I can't believe I hadn't thought of this idea of the pedi cab as the as the the ongoing survey for disability access. Like, let's talk more about that. I'm gonna go to Connor and then I'm gonna ask anyone else to hold comments so we can do the next. This is fantastic. I love it. But we won't stop the meeting until everyone's had a chance to speak. But I do want to get through the other updates before we officially run out of time. So Connor,



Connor Doherty 53:52

Chris, thanks so much. I just happened upon this group because someone forwarded me the email. And I'm so glad I did. Because this is fantastic. I live in Scituate, on the south shore. I'm on the beach commission in town. And we're pursuing many different initiatives to try to improve accessibility to our beaches in all different ways. When you were talking about all your different initiatives in Boston, two quick things came to mind. I'm not sure how much they've been looked at or not. But when I think about how historically beach access and pool access, recreational water access has been denied to certain communities, and how much we have to deliberately counteract that now and it sounds like you're doing a tremendous job of that with all these cultural events. I'm wondering, have you engaged schools in field trips to the beach? that's something I grew up with, a lot of people, you know, white privilege kids, in Massachusetts do field trips to the beach. I don't know how much that's a thing in the city. And then the other thing I thought of is representation on the beaches. You know, the lifeguards on beaches that have power figures right there, the figure of authority. And I just wonder if there's an opportunity to look at, whether it's through youth programs or whatever, you know, who is

going into lifeguarding, and hearing about this career event, like, how cool would it be for some young kid who's scared to go to the beach and see this lifeguard and be like, Oh, my gosh, I see myself in this power figure. So those are two quick thoughts. And then something I wanted to share, an initiative we're doing here that I'd love to follow up with you offline, for your expertise. We're a community that uses the Metco program. And we're also a community where the beach access is pretty privatized. So all the parking is for residents only. So Sunday we're trying to change right now is make parking, resident sticker, available to the families that participate in Metco. And if it works here, I'd love to try to extend that in the state. And that's where I think you'd be helpful with your connections to state legislature. Thank you.

C

Chris Mancini, STH/STB 56:19

Thank you so much, Connor. I really appreciate that you found us. We had some folks from Scituate in our first hearing actually. So really glad to see you here. And let's let's follow up on that. I mean, just really quickly, you know, save the harbor, we bring 30,000 people for free kids mostly to the Harbor Islands and beaches and the harbor each year when there's not a pandemic. And, to your point about lifeguards, I do want to call out, our Commissioner Susan Hamilton from the DCR is here and the DCR has been incredibly responsive. There's been a huge challenge in hiring, finding and hiring lifeguards. And you know, this is a pipeline issue in part. But you know, I almost considered quitting this job and getting a job as a lifeguard, they're offering like a signing bonus. And they're up to \$25 an hour, but I know, hold the hold out Susan, right, you guys gonna keep going up on that if people hold out, no pressure. But, you know, we do these trips to Spectacle Island every year, which has a swimming beach on it. And the DCR was incredibly responsive and making sure that there will be lifeguards on Spectacle Island so that the 500 kids who go there every Tuesday and Wednesday this summer, with our boats will be able to swim, because they'll have guards and we'll have safety. So that's just very briefly, but I appreciate you being here. And we can follow up more. And thank you, Susan for that. Alright, I am going to move into our second hearing, which we held in November. And I know we've already heard from Coleman about some of the work that we do there. But again, we were joined by over 100 individuals representing communities, from north to south on the water inland in upland communities. We had Kristin McCosh, from the city of Boston speaking as well on our panel, specifically about her experiences as a department director, but also as a resident of South Boston, dealing with with ramps and beach access and parking. And this quote more than anything really jumped out at us for retired Colonel Andrea Gal Bennett, who summed it up and I've used this quote so many times since then that without accessibility with limited accessibility, turns people into spectators instead of participants. And this is especially true of the disability community, people with disabilities. But it is true for anybody and especially when we look at that question of intersectionality. And that's almost become a mantra for us. I think, you know, we want people to be participants in your spaces, not spectators. And again, we understood from what we heard that we could take some immediate action, and so made funds available to purchase mobility mats and beach wheelchairs so that people with physical disabilities can have access to the beach and the water. We are doing that again, this year, I put my email in the chat, please reach out and ask us if you would like a floating wheelchair if you'd like a sand wheelchair if you'd like a mobility that DCR has the amazing Universal Access Program and has this availability on on many of the beaches but if you're a community organization, and you would like to increase that we want to make that happen with you. We also worked with the DCR to secure funds to repair and maintain the ramps, stairways and paths on the region's public beaches, which of course are one of the main obstacles when they're not clear when they're in disrepair or when they're covered in sand, which I'm going to show you on the next slide is an ongoing effort and there's

some great on the ground DCR staff who love the help, and we are proud to show up with volunteer groups to work on this. And so we continue to host beach cleanups to haul away truckloads of sand stones and debris. It's a little bit small in this photo, but on the on the right image from the patch, you can see that ramp down near M Street Beach, covered halfway up, you know, again, the ocean is a dynamic place, and that sand moves around and covers up those ramps. And so we have to stay on top of that stuff. In Christian, that's where we'll come back to you to bike every ramp, you know, let's do some off roading. And then, and then make a note and send us the GPS, GPS coordinates and we will show up with shovels. We have no shortage of people who are looking to give back and bring a huge group of folks out to service our beaches. So I did that one in record time. But again, I know Coleman, we already heard from you on on your work, but I'm going to lower a couple folks' hands here. Sorry, who already spoke, but just put it back up If you'd like to speak again. Now cole a I see you just put your hand back up. So please.

C Coleman Nee 1:01:07

Yeah, I just really wanted to share to thank you for all of this. And yeah, really, honestly, it's so encouraging to see this work going on. One of the things that I said, I'd been with the beaches commission for a long time, but I'll give you an even deeper perspective. You know, back in the 80s, I grew up in the city of Boston back in the early 80s. I was a lifeguard on Carson beach. And at that particular time, I sat on that beach for three years. And in three years, maybe one person went into the water. You know, the harbor wasn't clean, it was dangerous. There was really nobody whovcame to the beaches. I mean, people might have come down and put a lawn chair out. But even then the beaches weren't clean, they were filthy. And, you know, it was really sad. And today, I drive by the beaches in South Boston, and they are packed with tons of people and people are swimming, and people are having fun. And there are families out there and there's volleyball and everything going on. And again, from our perspective, that is a fantastic development. A tremendous amount of credit goes to save the harbor, Save the Bay and the beaches commission, and the legislature and DCR for getting this straight. But we just really want to make sure that that that activity and everything that's happening there is really accessible so more people can take advantage of it. Really appreciate, really appreciate the efforts that the commission and save the harbor save the bay are making in that regard.

C Chris Mancini, STH/STB 1:02:49

Thanks again, coleman, I really appreciate it. The beachability event continues to be I think an iconic moment and you know, the efforts we're looking to advance on this event is that it's available to people any day, and and easily available to people any day, not just if there's a fantastic event happening. Again, please put your hands up, I'm gonna move to the third and final hearing from this session. And comments are welcome at any time either after this or at the very end of the presentation. But we held our third hearing this year, overcoming language barriers to beach access, and I just want to point out this whole thing has been an iterative process, we held our first hearing, our intent was to focus on race, public health and the depths of the COVID pandemic and climate change. We are going to be moving on and dealing with climate change. But we heard in the first hearing that the comment about intersectionality, That language was really important and that people couldn't physically understand what some of the rules and regulations were. there was limits for people with disabilities. But once again, we were joined by over, you know, 100 people and not the same 100 people I will say and all of

these hearings, we had had different folks coming in and you'll see the list at the end of the hearing but we I think Councillor Boston Councillor Mahir was was at this hearing and summed up this comment I thought really well, which was our assessment that everything is in English predominantly. And if we're serious about creating these public spaces, then Translation and Interpretation information justice has to be that conversation. And we couldn't agree more. Once again, understanding that there's some immediate action we could take prior to that hearing, we as a staff at save the harbor and the Commission did a survey of the community, the communities and the beaches in the metropolitan regions area, and not going to actually ask anybody to shout it out. But if you could feel free to put your guess in the chat, but we surveyed over 250 signs on the beaches and you know, some are older and in disrepair, hard to read. But of these 250 signs, you'll have four seconds to put your guesses in, how many were not in English, or how many had translations not in English. And give you a hint with the amount of seconds but we found four. there were four. three of which had translation, or were exclusively in Spanish and one that had multilingual translation on four beaches. And I think that just drives home the point that there's a lot of information out there. But there's a lot of public health information. There's a lot of basic information for hours. I think one example in East Boston, which is not directly on the beach, but on the Greenway. Going to and from the beach, that there was a very specific example, but a woman who spoke Russian routinely would get locked onto the onto the bike path because of the timing of her commute. She would be walking back and she would be able to get on the bike path at the door, the gates would lock at the other end before she got to the other end. And again, this was English language, only information that wasn't letting her know that she was needed to know that this was going to be happening. But we're really grateful and proud to to lead that Acting Commissioner Stephanie Cooper made a public commitment to implement multilingual signage and QR codes at all DCRs beaches and parks. And that process is underway. We just had a meeting with the interpretive department of the DCR to put multilingual signage about public health on Kings Beach in Lynn, where where the beach water quality is lower than in most of our other communities. And so that process is underway. Working together there. We also have spoken with the Department of Public Health to work with us the MWRA to commission the DCR to improve the accuracy of beach posting protocols, which in our assessment fails to protect the public health. And as the example we did a pilot study or terrific policy team survey. the water quality analysis of when there was low water quality on constitution Beach, which I should say is a very clean beach gets a 90 or 92% rating overall, but that doesn't mean there are some days a year when you need to be careful, it is an urban beach. But the flags, the communication that told the public when it was safe and unsafe to swim, were incorrect 75% of the time last year and in 2020, By the way, they were incorrect 100% of the time, which means they posted a red flag when the beach was clean. So it was taking days away from folks when they should have been swimming on hot wonderful days, specifically over the holiday weekend last year I recall. And then on the flip side, in some cases was Mark clean on days it was it was dirty. So this problem is also exacerbated by the fact that the beach water quality website and the DPH is available in English only, and has not been updated since 2001 and includes some incorrect information. We did have a productive meeting with DPH last week, and they politely declined a request to join us today to share their thoughts on posting and flagging accuracy or plans or timeline to make this possible in English and other languages. So we feel incredibly strongly that timely and accurate information about water quality, human health and safety and data regulations needs to be available to everyone including folks who don't speak English as their first language. So following that third hearing again, we understood we could take immediate action and so we produced and distributed a report on best practices for multilingual signage, which you can find on our website and translate into 109 languages. You will translate as it is a wonderful thing made all subsequent MPC hearing a meeting notices and releases available. On our website, we've begun to add live interpretation and all NBC hearings. Today we are of

interpretation in Spanish which was requested. Again, we know there's more that can be done. We're working on having the resources to be able to provide more languages at all times but are trying to be prepared for folks who require that or would like that translation and interpretation of meetings. We are working with DCR MWRA in the city to implement best practices for multilingual signage. And we did take the liberty of moving the year or have environmental health website, FAQ is on to our website where you can translate them, despite the fact that some of that is still outdated information. So again, I only have about two minutes more presentation after this, but, you know, by a show of hands, but if anyone would like to speak, you have comments. If it's not specifically on Language Interpretation I'll finish up and then we can open it up widely on any subject. I'm going to take that as a, again, not to cut anyone off, but good guess this is what I was so excited you were you were talking about intersectionality. And youth and teens. You know, as I said, this is an iterative process. And throughout this, we said, well, there's a group we haven't heard from we realize, and that is young people and teens. this is a large demographic, this is a large group of people who have used the beach and want to be out there. And we're planning to engage them more actively. We have 40 young people from mostly from the city of Boston, Boston public schools and work for us each summer. We talked to them regularly. It's a very interactive group. And we again, partner with 130, community and youth groups. And we'd like to bring your youth together to talk specifically about how to use the beaches, what their needs are for safe and productive use of our public spaces. You know, each year when the weather gets hot, those first couple of weekends, and we saw it again, this year, there's there's high activity on the beaches, and you get a bunch of people who've been pent up with with the quarantine together and things can get out of hand. We don't deny it. But I think one of our fantastic partners at inner city weightlifting, this quote in the globe, from a couple of weeks ago, sums it up perfectly. Again, in terms of a mantra, we really need to find more things for kids to do in the summer. And, you know, I love seeing this from Reggie Talbert. And that's I'm just going to circle it back to our great partners, and grantees in the better beaches program. Many of you here, this is what you're doing. Go to our website, find the list of activities to see that you can find something nearly every day of the year. We did a participatory budgeting process this year. And we heard from a lot of young people. 400 people or 500 people participated in that process. One of the top vote getters was a team event on one of our public beaches. And so we began working really closely with our partners in South Boston and at DCR on the commission to put together a Teen Beach event, which is going to be July first. So if you've got a group, a youth group you work with, we'd love to have you bring your group down to that. there's going to be fishing, kayaking, food, the Boston Police ice cream truck will be there. I know we've got a bunch of folks from a couple of the police youth groups are already registered pedicab ride, pedi cab rides sorry, Christian, there will be pedi cab rides. We're gonna put put everyone to work, make them assess accessibility points on the day. But that's our presentation for today at our summit. Again, the question here is did we get it right? Please help us do this next phase and put into place our recommendations which will be coming out thanks to our co chairs again, Senator Creighton, rep madaro. All of our commissioners who are here and spoke today, I'm not ending the meeting, I am opening this up to public comment. But again, to make sure I do all my thanks to the MBC to save the Harbor's amazing staff and terrific board of directors, to the DCR. And the administration and over 200 people who took part in these hearings so far, and even more with written comments that we're still pulling together. It's a nice, it's nice to see all these names, all these folks participating all of your names, if they're not on there already, we'll go on to this list. And just want to close with with kind of a way we've been thinking about this. And when we look at the environment, you know, we valued biodiversity as a measure of the health of our ecosystem. And I like this analogy for the health of our community, that diversity on our beaches in our public spaces, is one of the most important measures of the health of our society. So thank you so much all for joining us today. Have a Happy Father's Day have a

wonderful Juneteenth weekend. enjoy the extra day off but you know, think about why why we're here and why why we're acknowledging that day. Just been told my computer's not plugged in. That's terrible. All right. I see hands raised and if I get kicked off here, Maria, if you can continue to call on folks. I'm going to make sure I don't get kicked off the call Nicole Oh,

N

Nicole McClain 1:15:02

hello, sorry, I don't have my camera on. But I just wanted to comment on what saves the harbor save the day has done by bringing all of these organizations together. the collaborations that I have in the works. And I've already been able to, to bring to life for my organization, north shore Juneteenth Association are enormous. And I just can't thank you guys enough for bringing all these diverse organizations together and for funding them and making sure that their vision for their event is actually going to come together and work. And I just want to also say that I'm honored to be a new commissioner on this commission, the work you guys are doing is amazing. And I'm so excited to join in and be a part of that. So thank you so much.

C

Chris Mancini, STH/STB 1:15:50

Thank you so much, I'm so glad to have you on the commission. Bob, you as well are their newest member.

B

Bob Chen 1:16:01

Very happy to be here and continuing learning, it's very exciting about what's going on, I have three quick ideas. One is youth are really smart and creative and unconstrained by I think a lot of things, I won't get into the details, but we might ask you in ways what they want for their future use of the beaches in a very wide demographic swath and and to have them draw a vision of that would be a really simple way of gathering maybe 1000 visions of what they would like to be doing on the beach. And and then we can pick figure out ways of accommodating that for the future use of the beach. So youth art as a way of of polling and surveying. The second is that as we get more people, particularly young people and diverse young people to the water, there is an incredibly, incredibly growing exponentially opportunity for jobs, on the water and offshore and the water, offshore wind and agriculture, which are traditionally on diverse fields. But it suggested the very beginning. So there may be some way to engage folks in the opportunities of these future jobs. And the third is, as much as the signs are all in English. They're even in English, they're scary looking. And so maybe there's some diagrammatic and artistic ways of making the signs more friendly and less language specific. And we might actually have the youth design some of those signs. So that three quick ideas that be happy to follow up on.

C

Chris Mancini, STH/STB 1:17:50

You said it, it's on the record, I love it. I guess your hand is up again.

G

Ghiz Benzerieb 1:17:58

Okay, so it's interesting that you segwayed into youth because that was the main topic that I wanted to talk about, which was the youth. So yesterday, I sat down with myself, and I just kind of wanted to write down the streams of consciousness I was having in regards to being someone who was very recently youth, I can still identify with youth, so I'm like, Alright, let me just tap into this and hone in for as long as I can until that generational gap ruins me, I guess. So what do young ones want to feel? I wrote expressive, joyful, and able to jump and take space. I also wrote: talk to people within their social groups. And then I kind of segwayed into this idea of thinking, or really remembering that it was kind of awkward being a teen or youth, and really, they just want to feel accepted and a part of something, it's part of something great too, you know. And then it brought me to the notion and the familiar feeling of youth have the purest form of hope. They actually have the conscious ability, once they hit 16, 17, 18, to realize, and they're the only people who have that privilege, no matter where they're coming from, or who they are, or what they're about is that they really have their whole lives ahead of them. And of course there are exceptions to everything, but they really do have their whole lives ahead of them and tapping into this very unique, very fleeting feeling that these youth have as adults or mentors in the community. I think that's something that we should capitalize on. All the more especially in these days with the pandemic and these past few years I've seen my younger brother, my younger sister changed so much within two years, changed in ways that I've never been able to even change within myself in my time as a 16, 17, 18 year old going to revere high. So then I wrote down how to translate this to safe beach time activities. So I'm thinking about this event that I went to that was thrown by my good friend, Ashley Meadowcroft. She goes by ash, and a friend of hers and they actually threw a type of event, we called it Woodstock. I was invited, because I know I heard through the grapevine it was everything that you think that Woodstock should be. There were private vendors, there were musicians there, I hope you can see this. But lots of jewelry make flower crowns like man knocked out with a bunch of tie dye that he's selling with this husky dog, like you would have sworn you're in Vermont kind of thing. And this was something that was organized, very quietly, very peacefully, and the turnout over 30 people. It wasn't publicly advertised, it was nothing too crazy. But when I tell you the impact that all of us together had made just being in this in this space. This was in Revere. I don't know. I mean, you cry, a couple people were crying at this event. It was just such a beautiful time of a bunch of hippie folk, if you will, getting together and just like playing music and like having a great time. And I was talking to Ashe, who's the organizer of this event. And I was telling her about my current position. And she was like, You know what, like, we do something for the youth. She was saying little concerts, but I kind of do basically just want to shout out if anyone is down to really do something the summer at the beach for the youth specifically, I know me and Chris had talked about Revere Beach kind of going viral for reasons that we didn't really want them to be going viral for especially on Tik Tok, you know, getting a little bit rowdy on the beach, you know, increased police presence, you know, wasn't good vibes, if you will, the vibes were not there. It's not fun, it's not cool to see youth trying to do something, and then not them, and then not being able to be totally successful with it, because they don't have the kind of guidance, they don't have any mentees. They don't have someone reaching out to them to be like, Hey, you want to do this, let's help you do this. And I think that saved the harbor has this very unique position right now to be able to collaborate with certain youth. And I think a lot of the people who are in this meeting right now or are very well connected with youth. And I think this is something that if we take a very conscious effort, we can do something really great and do something really fast too. I think that the youth is ready for it I think that the beaches are ready for I think we finally have the group of people in the community that are ready to rally around for you to help them feel what they want to feel, which is that feeling accepted feeling great feeling like they're a part of something feeling like feeling at home feeling at peace within you

know, their, their local beach or with their friends. And, you know, pandemic was quite traumatic for a lot of these kiddos, I'll be honest with you, I've see it I still see it every day. And it's I really want to be there for them. And I think that we can be there for them in ways that that they won't even realize how great it is until they're like my age thinking back on it kind of thing. Yeah, thanks.

C Chris Mancini, STH/STB 1:23:02

What great comments from from our last couple of commenters to set up our next hearing in our next phase. Really appreciate it. All right, the floor is open. If folks want to raise their hand, I will also be happy to stay and casually talk with folks. You know, we have a half an hour if we want it but I know it's a beautiful Saturday and if people want to get out and I won't hold that against you

G Ghiz Benzerjeb 1:23:41

I'm actually at a town for the weekend. So I'm gonna step out and enjoy the background.

C Chris Mancini, STH/STB 1:23:47

I figured out that is a real background, isn't it? I did see leaves moving.

G Ghiz Benzerjeb 1:23:55

Chris, thank you guys so much. Thank you, everyone. I'll be connected with some of y'all so don't be surprised to hear from me.

C Chris Mancini, STH/STB 1:24:02

Connor, I see your hands off again.

C Connor Doherty 1:24:05

Thanks. I had a quick question for you. If you had a magic wand and today, this weekend, you could change something, what would be the one thing you would change for this summer?

C Chris Mancini, STH/STB 1:24:15

I have like four different answers in my head. Yeah, I'm going to take my privilege as as the the ED of Save the Harbor. I'm going to answer not just one thing I'm going to answer a couple of things I would like to see all of the events that are planned to be really successful and I know that they will be because we have great people working on it. We're a really dedicated staff. I'd like to see clean water and progress on the beaches that still need it. And communication, the

point that we made in the presentation about having the Department of Public Health's flagging accuracy, it sounds very specific. But having that flagging accuracy improved, I think is a big deal because it will make sure people are safe on the beaches when it's time to use them. And it makes sure that communication is clear. And I want to see more daily easy access for people with disabilities on any beach, you know, that idea of spontaneity, and being able to head down whenever you want, like someone abled can in any year, any day I want, I can head down to a beach and walk onto it and get in the water. But that's not possible at every single beach for every single person. So we'd like to see that happen as well. I want to see more people coming into these hearings and into our grants program and more funding for that which it looks like thanks to our commissioners and our allies in the in the Senate in the house that by next year. Knock on wood. I gotta be superstitious, I'm not superstitious, but I'm a little stitious that we will have increased funding to be able to do even more grants and more funds for these amazing events that you all are planning. Amanda just put a question. Has any ARPA funding gone towards water quality improvement? Yes. Senator Crighton secured \$5 million for Kings Beach and Lynn which is the dirtiest beach in the Commonwealth. And there's a Water Quality Engineering Steering Committee Working together to identify solutions for the issue on that page lens only beach and so that is a both a water quality and environmental justice issue. Thank you all for being here. I'm gonna officially wrap this up and but I'll stay in the meeting. I just some of our staff will as well if anyone wants to keep chatting. I really appreciate you all being here. Thank you to everybody. Great job team putting this to have a great summer.



1:27:35